



THE RIDER

Getting seniors where they need to go

Seniors Week is here again! It feels like yesterday that our drivers were helping us celebrate our first seniors week of the pandemic by delivering pizzas, baked goods, flowers, and resource packages all over greater Edmonton.

This week is very special to Drive Happiness and the entire Alberta seniors sector. Our seniors have kept our spirits up throughout the past fifteen months and they are why we pushed through so many hard days. Their resilience and ability to adapt has been incredible to witness and we have learned so much about the strength of our older generations.

Happy Seniors Week to our Drive Happiness Family. Once again we will have to celebrate from a distance. We will be thinking of you all and hope that next year's celebration will be in person and better than ever!

Liza Bouchard, Executive Director

Celebrating Seniors Week

June 7th to 13th

This week Albertans are encouraged to show appreciation for seniors and recognize the important contributions seniors make to our province.



“Age is a gift to the city. We will value all individuals who bring it to us.”

Please note: Due to Covid-19 restrictions, our office is closed to walk in visitors until further notice. Please contact the office beforehand to arrange a time to visit. Our phone hours remain the same.

780-424-5438 | www.drivehappiness.ca | TF 1-888-336-4503

9916 45 Ave. NW | Edmonton, AB T6E 5J1

Humans of Drive Happiness

To celebrate Seniors Week, we wanted to highlight some of our amazing Riders. We learn so much from our clients and always enjoy speaking with them. The full interviews of Wilhelmina and Walter will be posted on our website later in June. We hope you enjoy reading these stories as much as we enjoyed listening to them.

Walter Hys: On Building Things That Last

"I think that the number one thing I'm most proud of: my wife Genah and I tried to be good role models. I have three daughters who live nearby, so we're always in touch. I feel very fortunate that we're so close because I can visit them, their husbands, and their children, and watch them grow up. The number one thing is to be a good role model, and I try to be just that.

My occupation was a businessman, and I spent a few years as a builder/ developer. One of the projects I'm proud of is the Hys Centre, located in front of the Royal Alex. We named it after my father, as he started a business at that location in the early 30's. I also have a sister who is an architect. So we had an opportunity to build a medical centre in 1979 in his honour, as an early pioneer business man in that location.

In my business career, I've had an opportunity to learn about the medical disciplines that go into a medical centre. I've also had the opportunity to interact with politicians, mayors, and even premiers- the kind of people who are active in building our city and province. These are the people who make things happen, and I have always enjoyed speaking with them.

There are also community developers, such as Christenson Developments in Edmonton. I live in one of their adult communities, which they designed in the Cameron area. You know nursing homes used to be built out of brick and mortar, like a hospital, and it was very expensive. But nowadays they build seniors homes the same way they build apartments, and it's far less expensive. This is important because the population is aging, and more people need to go into a home at some stage when they're not able to care for themselves.

There's a lot of satisfaction in building homes, apartments, or commercial properties, because you have to analyze what a community needs and fill those needs. And you'd better guess right! So it's a good humanitarian task, and builders are a very important part of our community."



Wilhelmina Ramos: On a Love Story for the Ages

"You know, I came over to work. I'm a retired nurse and I ended up in the small town of St. Paul. I was surprised, because it was quite different than where I'd come from. I worked there for four years- I liked the place, the healthcare system, the government- and I said 'Wow! This is the best place to stay!'. Before I left, I had been going out with my now -husband. So after working in St. Paul for four years, I went home and got married. He waited for me for four years! So I thought, maybe he's worth waiting for.

At first he didn't want to move, because he had good-paying work at the time. But I told him 'you know, it's so unstable in the Philippines. In the future, if we have a family, I'm not sure what kind of life we would be able to give them.' So we waited until our children were a little older, and then moved back. I think it was a very good decision.

My friends, when I tell them about my love story, say it's beautiful. So did the nurses at the Cross Cancer - because unfortunately I lost my husband. I think I only left his bedside twice. But it reached the point where he was very sick, and the nurses said 'let us take over, he's too heavy for you.' But guess what? He was able to go home again! Even the doctors called him the Miracle Man because no one thought he could make it.

I prayed hard every single night to spare more time, to show my husband how much we care for him. And I was given another chance- he lived for 15 months after that. The oncologist couldn't believe it. We tried our best to show him all the care, attention, and love that we could. And when he died, he died peacefully, with all of us at his bedside. The doctor said that because of our care, we were able to prolong his life.

So yeah, it is a very beautiful love story. The way he waited for me, and the way I looked after him, it was. My friends tell me that I could sell my story to Readers Digest and make big money! I always laugh and say 'do you think they would like my story?' And they say 'of course!'. There's even a tv show in the Philippines they were telling me I should write to, and they could make an hour movie out of our love story. That would be cool, you know?"



To our Riders: Please remember we need a minimum of three business days notice when booking rides. Week-ends do not count as the office is closed. Bookings can be made Monday through Friday from 9 am to 4 pm. This is necessary as our volunteers cannot always accommodate last minute bookings.

Welcome Home

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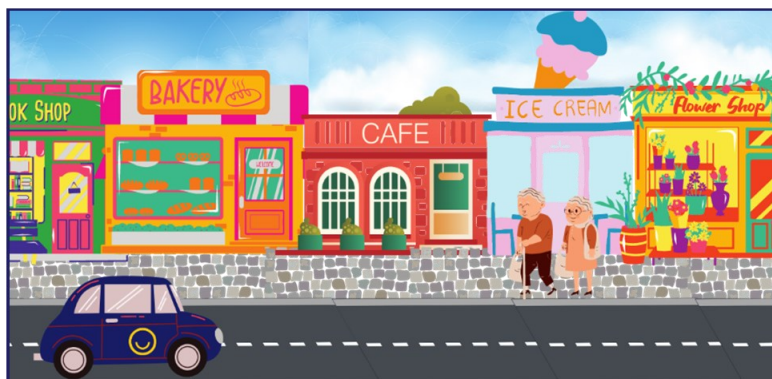
MARRAZZO LAW OFFICE

Call us today at (780) 756-5500

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Email: mlo@marrazzolawoffice.com

****10% off with Drive Happiness membership**



Your Annual Renewal is due!

To continue to book rides with Drive Happiness, please send in your annual renewal. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we will not be accepting in person payments at this time.

Things to do!

June 7th | 12pm to 1pm

Lunch 'n' Learn: Ways to Succeed in Aging in Place with Jolyn Hall ***VIRTUAL***
<https://www.seniorscouncil.net/events-calendar>

June 9th | 12pm to 1pm

Lunch 'n' Learn: Ageism and Aging: Upsides - Downsides ***VIRTUAL***
<https://www.seniorscouncil.net/events-calendar>

June 10th | 10am to 2pm

"It's a Wonderful Day in Our Neighbourhood" drive-thru shredding and food donation
Westend Seniors Activity Centre 9629 176 St NW

June 11th | 12pm to 1pm

Lunch 'n' Learn: Building Connections in a Post-COVID World ***VIRTUAL***
<https://www.seniorscouncil.net/events-calendar>

June 11th to 13th

THIRD ACTION Film Festival ***VIRTUAL***
<https://thirdactionfilmfest.ca/>

*Actions taken upon information in this newsletter are at your own risk.